

STUDY TOUR REPORT

DELAWARE STATEWIDE INITIATIVE

2022



Prepared by The Family Justice Center Alliance, a program of Alliance for HOPE International
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INTRODUCTION

It was an honor for our Family Justice Center Alliance (FJCA) Technical Assistance Team, a program of Alliance for HOPE International (Alliance), to participate in a Community Forum and Study Tour to support the development of a Family Justice Center in Delaware on April 26-28, 2022. The Study Tour process was an opportunity for the Alliance Team to meet with key stakeholders, service providers, and survivors to learn more about the services being provided in Delaware. The focus of the Study Tour was to identify the current strengths and gaps in the state's various service delivery

systems, pinpoint any processes that could potentially present challenges to survivors, and determine how the Alliance can best support ongoing efforts toward the creation of a Family Justice Center. As part of the Study Tour, the Alliance Team gathered feedback and information about your community through pre-planning meetings, anonymous partner surveys, online research, stakeholder meetings, and focus groups with survivors. Delaware is well-positioned to further develop and implement the first statewide Family Justice framework in the United States.

"FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS ARE THE QUINTESSENCE OF COLLABORATION."

HON. MICHAEL NEWELL, CHIEF JUDGE OF FAMILY COURT



BACKGROUND

For more than a decade, the Alliance has been leading the effort to break down silos by integrating and coordinating services using the Family Justice/Multi-Agency (FJ/MA) Center framework. Our collective community impact model creates a collaborative approach that comes alongside survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and human trafficking to break generational cycles of family violence. The Alliance is one of the leading systems and social change organizations in the country, creating innovative, collaborative, trauma-informed, hope-centered approaches that meet the needs of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children. The Alliance and its allied FJ/MA Centers serve between 150,000 and 200,000 adult and child survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault each year in the United States.

THE MISSION of the Alliance is to create pathways to hope for women, children, and men who are victims of domestic

violence and sexual assault through collaborative, integrated multi-disciplinary centers, teams, and initiatives in order to break the generational cycle of violence and abuse in families across the United States and around the world. The Alliance Team was pleased to learn more about Delaware's alignment with that mission and its commitment to implementing effective strategies that better serve survivors and their children.

THE ALLIANCE TEAM conducting the Study Tour consisted of Ken Shetter, National Director of the Family Justice Center Alliance (FJCA), Michelle Morgan, Executive Vice President and Director of One Safe Place in Fort Worth, TX, and Sarah Pike, FJCA Program Manager. Over the course of the three-day event, the team met with stakeholders across all three counties to learn more about the community's response to domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking.



**"WE ARE IN THE BUSINESS OF HELPING PEOPLE
MOVE FROM WHERE THEY ARE TO WHERE THEY
WANT TO BE. TODAY, WE UNDERSTAND HOPE
IS NOT AN EMOTION OR WISHFUL THINKING.
THERE IS A SCIENCE TO HOPE."**

CASEY GWINN, ALLIANCE FOR HOPE

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Honorable Michael
Newell, Chief Judge of
Family Court, Chair of
the Domestic Violence
Coordinating Council

Members of the
Domestic Violence
Coordinating Council

Moe Monagle

Laura Graham, Chair
of our Family Justice Center
Steering Committee,
Vice-Chair of the DVCC

The Governor's Office

People's Place II, Inc

Office of the Child Advocate

Al Nemours
Children's Hospital

Delaware Alliance
Against Sexual Violence

Community
Legal Aid Society

Delaware Coalition
Against Domestic Violence

Delaware Senate

Children's Advocacy Center
of Delaware

Smyrna Police Department

Dover Police Department

Wilmington
Police Department

Newark Police Department

Delaware State Police

Delaware
Department of Justice

New Castle County
Police Department

DSP Victim Service /
Delaware Victim Center

Delaware Volunteer
Legal Services

Tidal Health Nanticoke

Beebe Healthcare

Delaware House
of Representatives

Police Chief's Council

Christiana Care
Health System

Department of Services
for Children and Youth

Capitol Police

CHILD Inc.

YWCA of Delaware

Delaware Health
and Human Services

Survivors of Abuse
in Recovery (SOAR)

Children and Families First

Catholic Charities

THE HISTORY

The state of Delaware has been supportive of the Family Justice Center movement for decades. In 2005, a task force was established to assess the feasibility and impacts of establishing a Family Justice Center in the State. The Task Force was chaired by current Governor John Carney and included 30 agencies/departments critical to developing a Family Justice Center. Some of the anticipated positive impacts of establishing a Family Justice Center the 2005 task force identified included:

Victims of Domestic Violence would be able to access services more efficiently and effectively.

Service providers would have a more complete understanding of service availability and limitations.

Unnecessary service duplication can be minimized.

The task force also identified the need for wrap-around services including victim assistance services, basic life services, and governmental non-legal services. The scope of recommended services were, in part, informed by a survey administered to 86 survivors. This context demonstrates the rich, long, history of Delaware envisioning a future where victims of violence are served holistically and effectively by co-locating agencies and allowing victims to lead the way. While the community assessment completed in 2005 was in favor of establishing a Family Justice Center, it ultimately did not come to fruition at that time.

In 2021, the Delaware Domestic Violence Coordinating Council established a Family Justice Center Steering Committee to revitalize the conversation on the feasibility, impacts, and steps on the path to establish one or more Family Justice Center to support Delawarean victims of violence. The committee is working with Alliance for HOPE International to coordinate two statewide events, a three day Study Tour event and a two day Strategic Planning event. This report is the result of a three day state wide Study Tour event.



STEERING COMMITTEE

Laura Graham, Esq., Steering Committee Chair	Linda Carmichael, Chief Staff Attorney, Superior Court	Melissa Zebley, Colonel, Delaware State Police
Deputy Director, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.; Vice- Chair of the DVCC	Jenna Milecki, Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice	Robert Tracy, Chief of Police, City of Wilmington Police Department
Hon. Michael Newell, Chief Judge, Family Court; Chair of the DVCC	Sue Ryan, Executive Director, Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV)	Stephanie Hamilton, Director of Victim Services, Wilmington Police Department
Eleanor Torres, Counsel to the Chief Judge, Family Court	Venita Garvin, Executive Director, Delaware Alliance Against Sexual Violence (DAASV)	Thomas Johnson, Jr., Chief of Police, Dover Police Department
Senator Nicole Poore, DVCC Member	Lori Sitler, Executive Director, CHILD Inc.	Diane Glenn, Victim Services, Dover Police Department
Representative Krista Griffith, DVCC Member	Blanche Creech, Associate Director of Domestic Violence Services, People's Place II, Inc.	Brian Faulkner, Captain, Criminal Investigation Unit, New Castle County Police Department
Hon. Carl Danberg, Chief Judge, Court of Common Pleas; DVCC Member	Janine Howard-O'Rangers, Executive Director, Delaware Volunteer Legal Services (DVLS)	Ralph Holm, Captain, Georgetown Police Department
Hon. Nathaniel McQueen, Secretary, Department of Safety Homeland Security; DVCC Member	Rosalie Morales, Chief Policy Advisor, Office of the Child Advocate	Joseph S. Bloch, Chief of Police, New Castle County Police Department; Representative for the Delaware Police Chiefs' Council
Hon. Josette Manning, Secretary, Department of Services to Children Youth and Families; DVCC Member	Randall Williams, Executive Director, Child Advocacy Centers, Inc.	Christian Kervick, Executive Director, Criminal Justice Council
Meredith Seitz, Chief Policy Advisor, Secretary, DSCYF	Maria Matos, President & CEO, Latin American Community Center, Inc.	Kathleen Kelley, Coordinator, CJC
Debra Reed, Director, DSP Victim Services/Delaware Victim Center; DVCC Member At-Large	Stephanie Staats, Chief Executive Officer, YWCA of Delaware	

THE STUDY TOUR

The study tour kicked off with an online virtual Community Forum hosted by members of the Family Justice Center Steering Committee, Hon. Michael Newell, Laura Graham, Esq., and Maureen Monagle. The Coordinating Council expertly pivoted to a virtual forum only two weeks prior to the event based on fluctuating COVID rates. Through assistance provided by Focus Media Services LLC, the forum was live broadcasted through YouTube and 53 community members throughout the state were able to attend. The community

forum included opening remarks by Judge Newell and a presentation by Laura Graham and Maureen Monagle, Executive Director of the Delaware Domestic Violence Coordinating Council on the current common locations a victim needs to visit to get their needs met. Over 25 locations were identified! This presentation emphasized the need for making a client's physical and emotional journey more efficient and client centered. Ken Shetter and Michelle Morgan then presented on the history, philosophy, and structures of Family Justice Centers.

"[AM I IN]...THAT'S A TRIPLE CHECK!"

RANDAL WILLIAMS, CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER



MEETINGS

The Alliance team had the honor of meeting a variety of legislators, agency leaders, and frontline staff from various nonprofit and government entities. The passion was palpable as meeting participants worked through curiosities on how the Family Justice Center model could be implemented in Delaware. The conversations illuminated the immense culture of collaboration already present and the pragmatic challenges that need to be addressed. The diverse perspectives heard throughout the week provided a deeper understanding on the current service delivery process and the diversity of needs throughout the three counties. The Alliance team found there is widespread support for the creation of a Family Justice Center and an eagerness to participate in the planning and decision making process. Some key meetings included:

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY COHORT CONVERSATIONS

The first cohort consisted of thirteen participants who play pivotal leadership roles. The second cohort consisted of twenty-four frontline staff or “boots on the ground” workers of the entities hoped to be located onsite. The third cohort consisted of fourteen valued service providers who are not anticipated to be onsite at the initial opening of a Family Justice Center. Each cohort conversation was approximately 45 minutes long and in totality, surfaced the key themes reiterated throughout the week. The candor and openness in these conversations was deeply valued by the Alliance team as it allowed for curiosity to direct the remaining meetings.

NEW CASTLE, KENT, SUSSEX FAMILY COURT VISITS

The Alliance team was extremely fortunate to be able to visit the Family Courts in all three counties. Learning that all three

courts already have onsite advocates and a dedication to providing onsite resources is extremely encouraging to the spirit of the Family Justice Center model. Another exciting opportunity was learning that the Sussex and Kent County Courthouses were both going through renovations and expansions. Consistently, the question, what role should the courts play surfaced throughout the week. The dedication to service was truly highlighted through the court visits.

SHELTER PROVIDERS

The Alliance team was also fortunate to meet with the Executive Director of Child Inc, Lori Sitler, and a team of directors from People’s Place including Mamie Charest, Executive Director, Blanche Creech, Associate Director of Domestic Violence and Community Services, and Nancy Carranza, Program Manager of Abriendo Puertas. The team was also able to visit a few shelters to observe a client’s journey to transition into a safe shelter space. Concerns around confidentiality and resource sharing were discussed and assuaged as the principle of resource pooling was reiterated by the consultant team.

CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER OF DELAWARE

A meeting on the last day with CAC Executive Director, Randal Williams, provided tangible pathways to partner with the CAC in every county in Delaware. There is already a CAC in each county and Randy was excitedly sharing ideas of land plots near each which could house a Family Justice Center. The need for longitudinal care after the initial CAC engagement is recognized. A logistical consideration brought up by Dr. Stephanie Deutsch was the proximity to medical lab equipment for onsite forensic examinations.

PREVALENT QUESTIONS IN THE MEETINGS

- 1 Who will be the lead agency?
- 2 Where will it be and should there be more than one?
- 3 How will it be funded?
- 4 Will staffing a Family Justice Center impact staffing at our other locations?
- 5 What role should the courts have in the planning process?

Like with meeting participants in Delaware, these questions are common among communities developing Family Justice Centers. They have been intentionally addressed in the recommendations section.

"THINK OF THE LEAD AGENCY AS THE AGENCY YOU TRUST TO HEAR AND RESPOND TO THE CHALLENGES THAT WILL COME UP AS FAIRLY AS POSSIBLE."

SARAH PIKE, ALLIANCE FOR HOPE



PROVIDED BY LAURA GRAHAM AND MAUREEN MONAGLE OF DVCC

KEY THEMES

Throughout the Study Tour event, the following themes consistently emerged and are addressed in the recommendations section.

The State is ready - the time is now. While the creation of a Family Justice Center has been on the State's radar for over 15 years, the timing is right to move forward and make that vision a reality.

Addressing the unique needs of each county is critical to truly serving all citizens of Delaware.

Interactions with Law Enforcement have been the most daunting and disappointing for survivors.

Planning the financing of center(s) and staffing will need to be inclusive of key stakeholders for long term success.

**"WHEN THE
STARS ALIGN
YOU HAVE TO SHOOT
FOR THE MOON."**

GAEL STRACK, ALLIANCE FOR HOPE



COMMUNITY STRENGTHS/ASSETS

The following community strengths were overwhelmingly apparent:

Very supportive legislators including State Representative Krista Griffith who shared in a cohort conversation, "I think my job is to listen to your needs right now."

Very supportive courts. In addition to the immense leadership from Honorable Judge Newell, conversations with Commissioner David Jones highlighted that the judges are informed and engaged and court administrators such as Chaira Fox-Molock demonstrated a commitment to service.

Multiple community leaders who see a future which includes a Family Justice Center in Delaware.

Multiple properties and plots of land available as future sites.

Engaged survivor network to learn from and a history of engaging survivor's in decision making.

High levels of trust in the Delaware Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

A historical culture of collaboration among the entities critical for success.

Availability of ARPA funding may facilitate the process faster than if those resources were not available.

Awareness campaign has gone well. The consultant team noticed people were asking "how will this work?" not "what is this?" or "why here?"

Community stakeholders are invested in the moving forward with the planning and development process.

"SIX MONTHS ALMOST SEEMS TOO LONG TO WAIT."

LORI SITLER, CHILD INC.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

The following challenges were vocalized throughout the week:

Ensuring all partners maintain their dedication to client choice and consent when facilitating information sharing.

Maintaining buy in through the strategic planning and development process.

Ensuring resources are shared equitably.

Integrating offender accountability efforts.

Exhausted frontline staff after years of unprecedented stress globally.

Challenges with hiring and maintaining staff experienced throughout the entire country at this moment in our national history.

Previous experiences with FJCs that is not representative of the movement.

Engaging religious leaders as a resource.

PARTNER SURVEY KEY RESPONSES

Prior to the Study Tour, community partners throughout the State of Delaware were invited to participate in a Community Partners Survey. The data collected from the survey enabled the Alliance team to better understand the current state of interdisciplinary collaboration and identify potential hurdles to co-location. The survey is intentionally designed to pinpoint any sources of apprehension, which then helps the Alliance team work with your community

to mitigate any projected challenges of a Family Justice Center. The survey was completed by 74 community stakeholders from a variety of agencies, and the data revealed that there is strong buy-in and widespread of the benefits of co-located, inter-disciplinary services. The results also pointed to a need for shared decision-making as the community continues to plan for a Family Justice Center, as well as cross-training opportunities for community partners.

COLLABORATION

Respondents were asked if they worked closely with a number of service providers.

TOP FIVE

75% reported working frequently or closely with government agencies

72% reported working frequently or closely with law enforcement/police and the CAC

71% reported working frequently or closely with mental health services

70% reported working frequently or closely with community-based domestic violence programs

The service providers reported as the least frequently collaborated with include:

30% reported working frequently or closely with government agencies with faith-based communities

50% reported working frequently or closely with community-based human trafficking organizations

54% reported working frequently or closely with prosecution

The collective responses reveal a high level of collaborative efforts among key community member with an underutilization of the ability to collaborate with others.

TRAINING

The responses on training reveal a need for increased cross training. While it is apparent efforts to train are being made with no categories dipping below 50% of the respondents stating they had received training on that topic in the last 12 months. It was also apparent that the cross training can be increased with no categories reaching above 70% of respondent who had received training on that topic within the last 12 months:

70% had been trained on sexual assault in the last 12 months

69% had been trained on domestic violence / intimate partner violence in the last 12 months

67% had been trained on human trafficking in the last 12 months

65% had been trained on child maltreatment in the last 12 months

56% had been trained on strangulation in the last 12 months

55% had been trained on special populations in the last 12 months

51% had been trained on criminal justice systems in the last 12 months

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FOCUS GROUP WITH SURVIVORS

" I felt like the whole system failed me."

Input from survivors is a key element in the development and successful operation of a dynamic Family Justice Center. Survivors know what they do and do not want the Center to look like, what partners and services should be present, where the Center should be located, and even what the Center should be named. The Alliance Team conducted two focus groups with a total of eight survivors: six survivors spoke Spanish and two survivors spoke English, all survivors have been impacted by domestic violence. 4 of the survivors reported they have been "choked" (strangled) and all participants were very candid and openly discussed their concerns and negative experiences encountered as victims during their interactions with the criminal justice system and none of them ever sought medical treatment for strangulation.

In the case of non-fatal strangulation, one survivor shared there were no pictures taken and no arrest after a reported strangulation even though strangulation is a felony offense in the State. " I felt like the whole system failed me."

In one case, the survivor reported that she was pregnant and went to her normal OBGYN check-up appointment. In front of her abuser, the Dr. asked if she was safe which prompted the survivor to begin to cry. The Dr. then separated her from her abuser and later had to lie to her abuser to ensure violence did not escalate further.

All Spanish-speaking survivors shared unanimously in experiencing barriers in access to services due to a lack of translation services. Many advised their young children had to translate to law enforcement and commonality was shared when the court's certified translator was not understood by any of the Spanish-speaking survivors. One survivor shared, after not

understanding what had occurred during the court process to obtain a PFA.

" I felt more abused by the system than I did from my abuser."

Focus group survivors unanimously agreed that a Family Justice Center is strongly needed in multiple counties so they don't have to travel to different places to access services, a commonly expressed opinion in over 232 survivor focus groups facilitated by the Alliance over the years.

Survivors also feel the coordination of services between professionals will mean better provision of services overall. They advised to consider having free parking so they can access services, **"be transparent,"** and ensure that the Family Justice Center has a marketing plan. Many survivors advised that they had no idea who the community-based services providers were and didn't know where to turn for help.

"It would be a tragedy to build a Family Justice Center and no one knows it's there."

Each focus group concluded with brainstorming potential names for the Family Justice Center. Many survivors DID like the word "Justice" as many felt as though even though they did not get justice in their specific situation it was still their hope for other survivors in the future. For those that DID NOT like the word "Justice" they preferred names that include words like: support, victory or hope.

All of the focus group participants expressed an interest in providing ongoing input to the development process and were very honored by the opportunity to participate in the focus group. Lastly, survivors wanted to express gratitude to all the professionals in Delaware working to make a Family Justice Center a reality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list of recommendations is presented for your consideration as you move forward with planning for a Family Justice Center in Delaware.

1 SURVIVOR ENGAGEMENT: Survivor voices are central to the success of the Family Justice Center framework and their inclusion will be essential to the continued development of your Center. The participants with whom the Alliance met during the survivor focus group were eager to engage in the planning process and provided important feedback on several issues. The only thing that could have enhanced our interaction with Delaware survivors during the Study Tour would have been having the opportunity to engage more survivors through the focus groups. Consider adding survivors to your Steering and Planning Committees and conducting more survivor focus groups between now and the upcoming Strategic Planning event, later in 2022. We suggest adopting the Alliance protocol on survivor focus groups, and engaging all potential partner agencies in conducting additional focus groups with survivors. The Alliance has a [Focus Group Toolkit](#) to assist with this process. It is imperative for a large, diverse group of survivors to provide input regarding their expectations with the current systems and agencies, along with their ideas for a state-wide Family Justice Center Framework, as well as overall design and layout of the building itself. Finally, consider starting a VOICES Chapter as a mechanism to bring more survivors to the planning process to continue the momentum through Strategic Planning. Access the Alliance [VOICES Toolkit](#) for guidance.

2 FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER COORDINATION: Maureen Monagle and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council of Delaware are perfectly suited to continue coordinating the development of the Family Justice Center in Delaware.

3 STEERING COMMITTEE: The makeup of the Committee was well thought-out. By all appearances, the Committee is working effectively and cohesively. Still, we recommend considering a few strategic additions. For the Family Justice Center to be a successful, dynamic, sustainable framework, it must include and amplify the ideas of all key community leaders, partner agencies, and survivors. Ensure a diverse Steering Committee by including faith leaders, medical professionals, survivors and underserved populations. It is recommended the committee continues to meet monthly, moving toward the creation of the Center. We recommend all committee members review the FJC Framework Impact Report and read *Dream Big, Start Small and Hope Rising: How the Science of HOPE Can Change Your Life*. Some committees in other communities have divided up the chapters of each book, each taking the lead on a few, and then the committees come together to start dialoguing on the key steps toward developing the Family Justice Center.

4 STATEWIDE FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER FRAMEWORK:

A common theme during the Study Tour was interest in building a statewide Family Justice Center Framework, with a physical presence in all three counties. There are many dynamics, including the size and geography, population size and history of collaboration across the state, which encourage us that Delaware is well-positioned to create the first statewide Family Justice Center framework. It may not be feasible to simultaneously build three freestanding Family Justice Center facilities, however we recommend the Committee pursue development of a statewide framework, with the goal of ultimately having every Delaware resident served by a Family Justice Center. The Committee may want to consider dreaming big but starting small in its facilities and may want to consider the possibility of establishing a presence at or alongside existing institutions in one or more counties. In planning for a presence in each county, the Committee should consider the need to overcome the historic disparity in resources between counties that has negatively impacted underserved populations.

5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR CO-LOCATION:

It is recommended the Committee explore opportunities for co-location of key service providers, including domestic violence agencies and the child advocacy center as part of the development of the Family Justice Center. Specifically, give strong consideration to Child Advocacy Center's Executive Director Randal Williams' openness to the development of a Family Justice Center facility along with or alongside a new Child Advocacy Centers site in Kent County. Additionally, consideration should be given to development of a new CHILD Inc., emergency shelter facility as part of a Family Justice Center site in Wilmington. This strategy will also facilitate the goal to open an FJC in each county.

6 CULTURAL EXCELLENCE: A number of people with whom we met identified the need for a culturally responsive approach to the development of the Family Justice Center that addresses the concerns of survivors of color, those who are immigrants and members of the LGBTQ+ community who may be reluctant to seek services from the Center. The Alliance's technical assistance includes a focus on ensuring Centers look like the community in which they serve. This includes, but is not limited to, the Executive and Steering Committees, frontline services and programs, etc. In addition, a focus should be placed on how the Delaware Family Justice Center will message services to the community around onsite criminal justice agency partners to reduce fears and increase accessibility.



"SET THE TONE THAT VICTIMS ARE WORTH THE INVESTMENT"

KEN SHETTER, ONE SAFE PLACE

7 RESOURCES: Lack of financial resources was a theme we heard from a variety of service providers. Additionally, survivors and service providers described resource disparities between counties. Continue engaging local elected officials, state legislators and the Governor, as well as private funders. The funding model for most Family Justice Centers is a public/private funding mix. This funding mix can include funding stream solicitations such as federal grants and corporate and foundation grants. A state-wide Family Justice Center would present a unique opportunity for funding from the state, as the Family Justice Center could provide much needed services that would benefit the entire state's population. Consider inviting representatives from private foundations, elected officials or their representatives and other potential funders to Strategic Planning so they can be part of the visioning process for the creation of the Family Justice Center. Finally, the availability of ARPA and other pandemic-related funding presents a unique and, as Lori Stitler stressed, time-sensitive opportunity. Consider pursuing these resources even before Strategic Planning begins.

8 STRANGULATION TRAINING: The DVCC has previously hosted a day of Alliance strangulation training, so we found strong awareness of the benefits of extensive strangulation training during the Study Tour. Based on the Alliance's national research and experience, 70% of cases can be proven without victim testimony when law enforcement follows up on domestic violence calls with comprehensive investigations. The most at-risk victims are those who have been strangled. If a victim is strangled one time, she is 750% more likely to later be killed by her abuser, yet. To improve your response to non-fatal strangulation cases, consider sending a multi-disciplinary team, emphasizing law enforcement and medical and emergency room staff, to the Alliance's [strangulation prevention trainings](#) to better understand the risks, lethality, signs, and best practices for treating and prosecuting strangulation crimes. There are also a variety of tools and resources on our [Resource Library](#) that will assist with better supporting survivors of near and non-fatal strangulation assault.

9 CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES: Civil legal assistance is the most requested service at Family Justice Centers. Continue working with civil legal service providers to meet the anticipated demand for assistance. Engage with law schools to explore incorporating a DV civil clinic into the FJC framework. Consider a legal incubator model that has been adopted by several Family Justice Centers to provide more representation to victims in civil legal matters. Finally, begin thinking of more streamlined and coordinated processes for survivors to be connected to the variety of legal services they may need.

10 TOUR FAMILY JUSTICE CENTERS:

It is recommended that members of the Steering Committee tour a variety of Family Justice Centers across the country. The Sojourner Truth Peace Center (Milwaukee, Wisconsin) and The Family Safety Center (Nashville, Tennessee) are both comprehensive frameworks that involved significant public investment. Touring multiple Family Justice Centers will provide your community with creative ideas on how to develop a Center that will uniquely meet the needs of survivors in Delaware.

11 AFFILIATION GUIDELINES:

Consider becoming familiar with the basic requirements for becoming an Affiliated Center with the Alliance. The affiliation guidelines will help you identify the core full time onsite partners that Centers must have to be affiliated in the category of Family Justice Center. These guidelines will also prepare you for the baseline documents and operational procedures to have in place when your doors open.

12 CHAIRS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

WORK GROUPS: Begin to identify community stakeholders to serve as chairs and co-chairs for the work groups that will be created during the Strategic Planning process later in 2022. Suggested work groups include Governance and Facilities, Funding and Sustainability, Service Delivery and Operations, and Community Engagement, Outreach and Volunteers and Law Enforcement. The work of the Law Enforcement work group will be particularly important in developing a consensus around the importance of a significant on-site presence of law enforcement at the Family Justice Center, as well as addressing jurisdictional challenges. Consider adding a sixth Work Group focused on Research, Data and Evaluation. Once the chairs and co-chairs have been recruited, arrange for a Zoom call with the Alliance and anticipated work group chairs to discuss roles and responsibilities of the chairs, purpose of the work groups, and their role in the Strategic Planning process.



13 DATA COLLECTION AND

BENCHMARKING: The Alliance recommends that all participating agencies identify and document local domestic violence statistics to benchmark the progress of your collaboration, including: 911 calls; police reports; charged, negotiated, and/or dismissed criminal cases; recidivism rates; homicides; and temporary and permanent protective orders. Consider conducting a “mini safety audit” of your systems by gathering, randomly, and then de-identifying (prior to analysis) ten police reports, ten protection order files, ten cases from domestic violence court, and ten 911 tapes. The Alliance often assists in analyzing this information for communities, but members of the local planning team, such as faculty from higher education institutions, are likely the best people to conduct this evaluation.



14 ADVERTISE THE STRATEGIC PLANNING

EVENT: Advertise the Strategic Planning event and coordinate all details with the Alliance Team once you have had an opportunity to address the recommendations in this Study Tour report. Hold intentional, one-on-one meetings with potential partners to learn more about the services they provide and personally invite them to Strategic Planning. Emphasize the importance of having all voices represented in the planning and visioning process for the Family Justice Center. We recommend 100-125 participants for the two-day Strategic Planning event. This could include: Leaders of agencies and direct service providers (frontline workers); Representatives from all law enforcement agencies; Medical providers, including emergency room staff; Faith community leaders; Business leaders; Educators (middle school, high school, and college level); Civil legal service providers; Social service providers; Professionals from the affordable housing sector; Law schools City and County officials; Potential funders Survivors; Local architects; Leaders from other community groups, such as tribal leaders, Latinx community, etc.; Criminal and civil justice system agencies (including prosecutors, judges, magistrates, and clerks); Local Bar Association.



15 JUDGES/COURT SYSTEM: The Alliance team was very impressed with the level of involvement of the Family Court system in championing and partnering in the development of a Family Justice Center and recommends its continued vital role in the process. The Alliance strongly recommends continuing virtual hearings, especially once the Family Justice Center opens. Survivors could receive services in a safe and secure location at the Center as they wait for their protection orders and/or trials instead of entering the courthouse, which survivors in over 230 focus groups express induced fear and confusion. Video conferencing could be utilized for protection order hearings and other court procedures where information is needed from the victim. Ensure the judges are included in the Family Justice Center planning process and focus on building this partnership as the Family Justice Center develops. The Alliance also recommends including professionals focused on offender accountability and intervention in the conversation to begin looking at ways to incorporate offender accountability into the Family Justice Center framework, and to assess the following: How effective are offender programs? How do they measure success? How are offenders signing up for treatment? Directors of Family Justice Centers around the country have begun talking about the need to safely incorporate offender accountability into the co-located service delivery framework. This conversation is focused on supporting survivors who want to keep their family intact while ensuring their partner is held accountable and receives help. These important conversations challenge the notion that only addressing the needs of survivors will change the paradigm of abuse (i.e., end abuse).

16 TRAINING: As the community continues to plan for a Family Justice Center, pinpoint additional training needs for community partners and core team members, including, but not limited to human trafficking, the criminal justice system and working with special populations. In addition, consider engaging the faith community to create training opportunities to support their role in the community.

17 TRANSPORTATION: Consider including transportation as a line item in the projected budget and expenses. In meetings with community partners, it was acknowledged that transportation and parking can be a barrier to survivors accessing services. Transportation will be an important factor in the planning process. Some Family Justice Centers have purchased vehicles and hired or brought retired law enforcement or others as volunteers to provide transportation services to survivors. Others have fundraised in order to provide clients with gift cards for gas, bus passes, and ride sharing apps. It is recommended that the Steering Committee consider transportation as they continue to plan for the Family Justice Center.



18 FOCUS ON CHILDREN: Children exposed to domestic violence are six times more likely to commit suicide, fifty percent more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol and are abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1500% higher than the national average. Additionally, witnessing domestic violence causes the same kind of harm to a child's mental health and learning as if the child had been physically abused. It is recommended that the Committee develop a plan to serve the needs of child witnesses and identify the agencies who will be responsible for providing those services. It is important to continue engaging Child Advocacy Centers as a vital partner in creating collaborative services for survivors and their children. Identify potential partners that may want to begin planning development of a local Camp HOPE America program, the Alliance's nationally recognized camping and mentoring program for children impacted by domestic violence. The Alliance will present more information on Camp HOPE America during the strategic planning process later in 2022. Camp HOPE America is one of the most dynamic ways to engage in vision casting and practical support for children and teens experiencing trauma in Delaware.

19 COMMUNICATION: Consider a plan to keep the public and community informed on the planning process of your Center on a regular basis, such as a website. See, for example, this [website](#) created by a community in North Carolina.

20 SHARED SUSTAINED FUNDING POLICY: Review and share the Alliance's [Shared Sustained Funding Policy](#) with all potential partners during the planning process for feedback and potential adoption.

21 GUIDING PRINCIPLES: Review, share, and consider formally adopting the Alliance's Guiding Principles at the Strategic Planning event.

22 ATTEND THE 13TH ANNUAL DIRECTORS LEADERSHIP SUMMIT: Register a team to attend the 13th Annual Directors Leadership Summit in Colorado in September, 2022.

23 ATTEND THE 23RD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER CONFERENCE: Plan ahead to register a multi-disciplinary team to attend the 23rd Annual International Family Justice Center Conference, May 9-11, 2023. Consider fundraising to cover registration of staff from partner agencies to attend the Conference as a developing team.

24 RESOURCES FROM THE ALLIANCE: Become familiar with the Alliance's Online Resource Library funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, which includes toolkits, webinars, sample protocols and forms. Visit our online [Resource Library](#) for access to the library and more information about Family Justice Centers. Attend the Alliance's monthly Directors Calls for developing and operating Centers. They are held the 2nd Wednesday of every month.

CONCLUSION

The DVCC and its many community partners have done an excellent job of coming together to begin talking and dreaming about the development of a Family Justice Center for all of Delaware. You all have demonstrated the passion and vision to continue working toward the creation of a dynamic, thriving Family Justice Center. Through the implementation of the above recommendations, we believe your community will be ready to conduct a Strategic Planning event in October 2022. The Alliance is committed to doing all we can to support your planning process, and

we look forward to seeing the first statewide Family Justice Center framework emerge in Delaware that will provide trauma-informed and hope-centered services for survivors and their children. Our President, Casey Gwinn, looks forward to being with you all in October 2022 as the vision for your Family Justice Center takes shape during the strategic planning days together. We encourage you to DREAM BIG! But we encourage you to start small, because survivors in your community need all of you working together to create pathways to hope and healing,



**YOU ARE READY;
YOUR COMMUNITY GETS IT.**

Gael Strack

ALLIANCE for
HOPE
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